

SUCCESS STORY
SAN JACINTO RIVER WASTE PITS SUPERFUND SITE
OCTOBER 2015

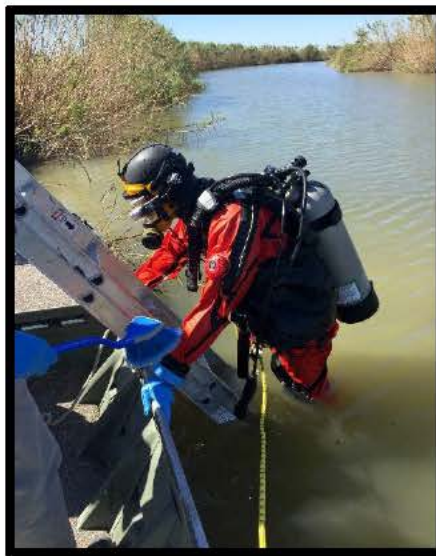
Title: "Environmental Protection Agency – Making a Difference in the Community"

Site Location: The San Jacinto River Waste Pits Superfund Site once operated as a paper mill pulp disposal site situated east of the City of Houston Texas between Highlands and Channelview. The pits were built in the mid-1960s for disposal of paper mill pulp wastes containing dioxins and furans. An armor cap was installed as a temporary removal action in 2011 to prevent erosion of the wastes into the San Jacinto River and to prevent direct contact with the waste material. Much of the armor cap is underwater at normal tide conditions.

Current Status: Prior to the installation of the armor cap a large part of the waste pits were under water resulting in dioxin entering the San Jacinto River and contributing to water, fish, and sediment contamination. People were also trespassing on the site and being exposed to dioxin through contact and consumption of contaminated fish. With the construction of the armor cap as well as security fencing and warning signs, the dioxin exposures are being prevented, and sampling confirmed that dioxin is no longer washing into the river. Regular inspections and bathymetric surveys are being performed to check on the condition of the armor cap. However, the underwater portion of the cap is not visible, and the surveys have limited ability to check for any underwater erosion that may be occurring. The Environmental Protection Agency dive team is preparing to complete an underwater inspection of the cap to assess how it has fared during the four years since construction, and to participate in sample collection using pore water samplers to confirm that no dioxin is migrating into the river. The EPA divers will inspect armor cap integrity visually and by side scan sonar imaging. The dive team has completed a preliminary reconnaissance of the site and will perform the underwater inspection in December 2015. Site information is being regularly communicated with the community through community meetings, fact sheets, and a Community Advisory Committee including EPA, state and local agencies, a citizen's group, and the Potentially Responsible Parties.



San Jacinto River Waste Pits



EPA Dive Team in operation

